Dear Sir/Madam,

On Friday, 8 April 2022, the fourth and final meeting for the Global Environment Facility's 8th replenishment concluded with pledges of USD 5.25 billion for the four-year GEF-8 replenishment cycle starting in July 2022, a 29 per cent increase in funding compared to the GEF-7 period.

I wanted to share this great news with you directly. And it truly is great news for the Minamata Convention, for which the GEF serves as one of the two parts of its financial mechanism. Funding pledged for the Convention increased to $265 million for the four-year cycle. This represents a resounding recognition by donors that action to address chemicals and waste, including through the Minamata Convention, is essential for the health of people and the planet.

You have been an instrumental part of this journey. Your deliberations on GEF-8 during the online segment of COP-4 last November, your engagement with GEF CEO and Chairperson Carlos Manuel Rodriguez during the online and in-person segments of COP-4, and your work at the national and regional levels to ensure that Minamata Convention implementation needs were taken into consideration in the replenishment process – all these have had important impacts.

At the third meeting of the GEF-8 Replenishment on 2 February 2022, I noted that programmes across the GEF portfolio -- on biodiversity, climate change, land degradation, international waters and chemicals and waste -- must be mutually reinforcing to maximize their effectiveness. Replenishment participants agreed to launch a number of new integrated programmes, including one on Elimination of Hazardous Chemicals from Supply Chains. This programme, along with other integrated programmes, is expected to deliver important results for the Minamata Convention. As the GEF CEO stated during COP-4.2, "We believe that we have designed a strategy that will address the needs of the countries and the obligations of the Conventions in an integrated way. Collectively, these will propel us forward towards our shared goals to end pollution and make mercury history".

I wish also to emphasize the importance the Specific International Programme in addressing implementation needs that are distinct from those that are met through the GEF. A strong replenishment of the Specific International Trust Fund will allow us to launch a Fourth Round of Applications to the Specific International Programme in a timely fashion.

Let us continue this journey together as planning for GEF-8 and a new SIP Round move forward. Let us also remember that mobilization of national, bilateral, and private sector funding must be part of our efforts. Thank you for your ongoing dedication to this important work.

Yours sincerely,

Monika Stankiewicz
Executive Secretary

To: National Focal Points for the Minamata Convention on Mercury

Cc: Permanent Missions to the UN Environment Programme and to the UN in Geneva